The Honorable Toni Nathaniel Harp The Honorable Toni E. Walker Appropriations Committee Connecticut General Assembly Legislative Office Building Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Dear Senator Harp and Representative Walker,

I write to you in my capacity as Chairman of the Board of the Connecticut Convention and Sports Bureau. As you know, the Connecticut Convention and Sports Bureau (CTCSB) is a statewide public-private partnership that brings group conventions and conferences as well as sports events to Connecticut from across the nation.

Members and stakeholders of the CT CSB – membership now totaling 197 corporations, hotels and hospitality entities, colleges and universities, convention centers and entertainment halls – partner with the State of Connecticut to market the state as a hallmark location for group events. During the past year the partnership has attracted 127 groups to the state, resulting in total sales revenue of \$25,435,052 and total Connecticut sales tax of \$2,234,172. These activities are critical to supporting over 8,000 jobs within the state's hospitality industry.

The state's investment in these economic development efforts is critical. And it is accretive. Tourism overall, including the Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau, is a revenue generator, as we bring people and revenue from outside the state to our cities and towns. This investment is not a cost to taxpayers.

I encourage you and your colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to support Governor Malloy's proposed investment in tourism. The allocation of \$15 million to our statewide tourism efforts is a lynchpin in our state's economic development efforts and is critical to our state's economic growth.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 860.805.9868 or RFlynn2000@gmail.com.

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Robert Flynn